

Stoever House

1803 Grove Avenue - Classic Revival Style - 1909 - Ernest M. Wood, architect

The impressive brick house on the northeast corner of Grove Avenue and 18th Street was built in 1909 for a Mrs. Stoever who had just moved to Quincy from St. Louis. The architect was the well-known Quincy designer Ernest Wood. The house was altered in 1914 when the porch and porte-cochere on the 18th Street side were added. The house at this time had already passed into the ownership of a Mr. Fischer who was a great car enthusiast and the present garage was also built at this time. The architect for the 1914 additions was another famous Quincy designer, George P. Behrensmeyer. The work at this time was done in an early adaption of the Prairie Style. This addition gives the house its long horizontal feeling which is quite different from the original more stately classic mass. The west porch, or veranda, has the roof supported by large piers, massive in appearance. All is strongly defined by projecting caps or copings. Because of the second owners great love for automobiles and the early period in which this work was done, a gasoline pump was installed at this time in the area of the garage.

In the original design of the house the principal entrance was located on Grove Avenue and this can still be noted by the larger and more impressive design of the door opening onto this porch...the inclusion of the sidelights adding to its importance. The west entrance also had a half circular porch very similar in design to the present south porch. However, an early photograph of the house shows that the south porch originally was minus its present railing, whereas the railing did appear on the west porch. It may be assumed that at the time of the 1914 additions, and the removal of the west porch, the railing was moved to the south side. Also, the original scheme of the house and grounds had a large and impressive circular drive on the Grove Avenue side.

Although, as was stated above, the house now has much of the feeling of a Prairie Style structure, one can still note the details of ornamentation that place it in the Classic Revival category. This can be especially noted in the slender, finely executed columns of the south porch, the railing, and the very ornate hood-like fenestrations of the dormer windows. The well proportioned sun porch on the east side of the house is further evidence of Wood's original concept for the house. The interior also has much fine classic work. Note especially the fine egg-and-dart moldings on the entrance doors and the beautiful design of the staircase.

The layout of the interior is most unusual. The stairhall is located exactly in the center of the house and one enters directly into the living room. To the north of this room is located the library...originally used as a music room. These two rooms are separated by large sliding doors. Opening off the library to the east is the dining room with its large north bay featuring windows with rounded glass. These two rooms are also separated by large sliding doors. Since the original owner was a semi-invalid, there is a bedroom, dressing room and bath suite located on the main floor. This main floor is beautifully finished off with oak moldings around the doors and windows and at the cornice. Most has been refinished to its present pale natural shade. The door between the living room and the central hall originally included large columns but these were removed at sometime during the previous owners occupation. The principal floor has 13 foot ceilings. There are two working fireplaces...in the library and the bedroom. The second floor, not open on today's tour, contains three bedrooms and a bath.

Much credit is due the present owners, Mr. and Mrs. James Keefe, who have beautifully restored the house. It serves today as a background for a collection of fine antiques and contemporary art work.

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